

## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Portfolio for Practice Scoring, Fall Cluster Leader Training 2006

The portfolio in this file will allow potential scorers to move through the scoring process to get a feel for how it works. There is no rationale written for this portfolio and no score pre-assigned as the goal in providing it is simply for practice. You may compare your subdomain scores with other scorers to see how closely you agreed. There will be official practice and quality control portfolios that accompany spring training.

KENTUCKY WRITING PORTFOLIO Table of Contents Grade 12			
Student Signature Sheet Included and Signed		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N    (Circle One)	
Fill In Number Selected	Category/Descriptor	Content area At least <u>two</u> pieces must come from a content area other than English/language arts	Page
1	<b>Reflective Writing</b>		
	Title: Letter to the Reviewer	English/language arts	1
1	<b>Personal Expressive Writing</b> (Include 1 or 2) <i>Personal Narrative, Memoir, Personal Essay</i>		
	Title: It Just keeps going and going...	Government	4
	Title:		
1	<b>Literary Writing</b> (Include 1 or 2) <i>Story, Poem, Script, Play</i>		
	Title: Dew Drops and Daggers	English	7
	Title:		
2	<b>Transactional Writing</b> (Include 1 or 2) <i>Various Real-World Forms</i>		
	Title: Letter to Mr. Wilson	Exceptional Childhood Education	8
	Title: In Memoriam: An Accomplished Piece of Poetry?	English	10
5	<b>Total</b> (must equal 5)		

Kentucky Writing Development Teacher's Handbook  
 Kentucky Department of Education – 2001 Update

Appendix H  
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## STUDENT SIGNATURE SHEET

(Required in Each Portfolio)

Please read the Note to Students and Teachers below before signing the following statements.

### Required Verification Signature

The pieces in this portfolio are my own original work. I am the author of all the pieces in my portfolio. I may have talked about my work (conferenced) with my teacher, family, and friends, but I have made any changes and corrections myself. I did my own writing, typing, and/or word processing (unless otherwise indicated by a teacher's signature in the box below labeled "IEP/504 Plan Adaptations").

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

IEP/504 Plan Adaptations (requires teacher signature):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Signature

### Optional Permission

I agree to allow my portfolio to be photocopied for use by others outside my school as an example of student work. I understand that my name, the names of my school and town, and any other identifying information I may have used in my writing will be removed before my portfolio is copied.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature (optional)

**Required Verification Signature:** It is required that the work contained in each portfolio is the original work of the student. Every portfolio must include the statement, signed by the student, that the work in the portfolio is his/her original work. This sheet must be placed in the portfolio. If the verification statement is not signed, the portfolio will receive a performance rating of Incomplete.

**Optional Permission:** The use of actual student portfolios is critical in teacher training and is essential for quality control checks during statewide re-scoring activities. Students are requested, but not required, to give permission for this purpose and should sign the optional student signature above if they agree.

**Please note that portfolios are included in any statewide re-scoring activities even if neither statement is signed.**

Dear Reviewer,

Stephen King once said “when people ask me ‘How do you write?’ I invariably say ‘One word at a time.’” King’s answer, while sounding quite overwhelming at first, served as a source of encouragement for me as I began to write my final portfolio, for his words hold so much truth. A writer can really only write one word at a time. If she writes too fast, she will consistently overlook important ideas, making the piece choppy, confusing and possibly exclude any necessary transition or explanation. However, if she incessantly looks back on her work and relentlessly questions what she has written, she will eventually become frustrated, and may never complete the piece, regardless of how much potential it has. One word at a time, though, she can fill her readers’ hearts with compassion, wet their brow with suspense, or inspire them to change the world around them. In the pieces I have included in my portfolio, I meet these needs of my readers through appropriate use of poetic devices and also show my understanding of them. In order to write effectively, I’ve also learned new strategies to use during the writing process like free writing and the use of graphic organizers.

In my poem “Dew Drops and Daggers” I embraced metaphors and similes. In “Dew Drops and Daggers,” the title itself consists of two different metaphors I used to describe the words of my close friend as he divulged to me that he was depressed and explained why. Words, in different situations can vary a great deal in their tone and meaning. These two different metaphors help me convey to my readers a change in the mood of our conversation as I realized how troubled he was. His words changed from “velvety words” like “viscous drops of dew” to “steel daggers sharpened by the recollection of painful memories.”

To further show my understanding of the use of poetic devices, I examine their use by the poet Alfred Lord Tennyson in my essay “In Memoriam: An Accomplished Piece of Poetry?”

While analyzing the poem "In Memoriam," I explore Tennyson's use of juxtaposition and metaphor. He juxtaposes his feelings towards death in different lyrics to help explain the grieving process. Then, I analyzed his metaphor "and every winter change to spring," finding it to be a comparison between the transition of nature from the cold and uninviting winter to spring and the change in Tennyson's feelings of loss and sadness to acceptance of death. In fact, I have also come to enjoy reading and interpreting famous pieces of poetry in addition to writing my own.

This year, my English teacher has enlightened me to the effectiveness of graphic organizers and free writing. I have come to find that free writing serves as an excellent brainstorming strategy for me. When writing my personal essay "It Just Keeps Going and Going..." I used free writing to help me gather a variety of experiences where Robert Frost's quote about life so that I could pick which ones would suit my paper the best. Free writing gave me an opportunity to lay out all my ideas and to see how they would fit together, and what I would need to add to make them more cohesive. After choosing the experiences I would use, I also used graphic organizers to help me manage my ideas and organize them appropriately. One of my favorite graphic organizers to use is called an Etch-a-Sketch. In this graphic organizer, I was able to take my words and ideas and make them into specific pictures that I would want to convey to my audience. It was especially important while writing my poem.

Throughout the writing and revision process this year, I have most definitely grown as both a writer and a person. Through analysis of other writer's works and beliefs about writing I now have a better understanding of the use and manipulation of the English language. In previous years, when I looked down on graphic organizers, and was not comfortable interpreting other people's poetry, I now realize that I was limiting my own ability to write. Learning new

strategies and exploring different kinds of literature for new ideas and themes has helped me become the writer I am now. Hopefully, with King's inspiration, the new strategies I have learned and the effort I have put into generating this portfolio are accurately depicted in these pieces.

Sincerely,

### It Just Keeps Going and Going...

Robert Frost once said, “In three words I can sum up everything I’ve learned about life—it goes on.” In many people’s minds, I have only begun my journey through life, but already, Frost’s words are ringing true.

I will never forget the first time I saw my father cry. I had just arrived home from school, and the garage door had been up to let me in as usual. The afternoon sunlight was dancing around a clutter of forgotten lunch dishes when I spotted my parents in each other’s arms. He was crying because he had been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, a disease with no cure and few medications to ease the symptoms. But, the true debilitating consequences of the disease didn’t set in for nearly six years. After a devastating relapse, his nine to five job as an allergist was too much. The excruciating pain forced him into retirement, and it hurt him deeply to lose his independence. It hurt me just as much to watch the hero of my life fall to pieces around me. His retirement greatly affected the household. Every night as I floated weightlessly into sleep, I would ask God to take away his pain. I’m still waiting for that answer, but have come to understand that the joys of life are not going to wait for me, or my father.

Several years later, Frost’s words were recalled in my mind. My family and I were finishing a movie; it was past midnight, and my bedtime. The phone’s sharp, unexpected ring broke our laughter, and my mother’s face wore a quizzical expression as she reached over for it. “Hello?” the expression quickly changed into one full of anxiety and confusion. “Mom, did you call an ambulance?...We’ll be right over,” her panic stricken voice told my grandmother as she jumped out of the bed with the vigor of a child on a Saturday morning. Obviously, something was terribly wrong, and my eyes were

welling with warm, salty tears before anything else was said. No one bothered turning off the television, it just laughed obnoxiously as the family exited the house in mismatched pajamas. Entering the car, the five minute drive to her house did not pass quickly enough. Huge drops of rain hit the windshield in a monotonous rhythm that matched that of my racing heart as we sped through the neighborhood. Without knocking, my mother burst through the front door of my grandmother's aging house, racing up the moaning stairs. My little cousins had been spending the night there, and they had been sent to the darkened living room to wait out the drama. I joined them, and held the youngest one trembling in my arms. Upstairs, my mom was doing CPR on my grandfather, yelling at my father to get this or that in an attempt to save his life.

My grandmother had called an ambulance, but by the time the paramedics arrived, my grandfather was already gone. It was a tragic and devastating blow to the whole family, and is an experience that will stay with me forever. However difficult, though, life has gone on. Now, my grandmother sleeps alone at night and celebrates Valentine's Day at the gloomy cemetery rather than an upscale restaurant. My grandfather's is remembered, but his death is not dwelled upon. The black and white picture of him hanging on the sun-bleached kitchen wall will never be moved, and neither will memories of him be taken from my heart.

One night many months later, I was driving home. I had been peering out the window, searching for Orion and his twinkling belt, when I heard sirens in the distance. I strained to see where they were coming from. Then, I spotted an ambulance, weaving haphazardly through the intersection full of half-concerned traffic. It passed me, and I watched it fade away into the distance in my rearview mirror until its red and yellow

lights became low hung stars on the horizon. I was reminded of the night my grandfather died. Somewhere, someone was in trouble. Whether an irresponsible teenager had caused an accident, or an elderly man had breathed his last, people's lives were changing forever. However, life here at the intersection hardly slowed down long enough to let the ambulance slip by. Once the sirens had faded and the lights were but pinpricks in the distance, life was already going on for the rest of us.

Knowing that life goes is an encouraging fact of life. Whether it is after I fail an important chemistry test, or after the death of a loved one, I know that when I wake up the next day, life will continue. Robert Frost confirmed these beliefs in his simple statement about life. I know that I must not let my tribulations overwhelm me, but to face the challenges of life and overcome them, because regardless of my reaction to the difficulties of life, life will go on, with or without me.

4409 Highway  
, KY 40  
March 5, 2006

Dr. E. W.  
High School  
, KY 403

Dear Mr. Wilson,

As one of High School's peer tutors, I help with the functionally and mentally disabled (FMD) students that attend school here. Unfortunately, it has become obvious that these wonderful people are neglected of the cafeteria privileges that the rest of the students already have and do not appreciate. Everyday, many of the FMD students eat lunch together in their "special" room, separate from the rest of the student body. This routine must be broken. By forcing these students to eat lunch in the privacy of Mrs. L.'s room, in the absence of their peers, you have unknowingly taken away their opportunity to actively learn social skills and meet fellow students. The only way to fully integrate all of the FMD students into the regular student body is to give them *all* the alternative of eating with the rest of the students, with their friends, in the High cafeteria.

Several of's FMD students already eat lunch in the cafeteria. When questioned about their experiences they all agreed that eating with the general population was indeed a highlight of their day. Jeffrey enthusiastically recounted days when he ate with other peer tutors and had the chance to talk to other students saying, "I really like eating in there. It's fun to see you guys [the peer tutors] in there at lunch." Often, I see him in the cafeteria approaching other people, the cafeteria staff, the assistant principals, and other students. In fact, Jeff and I talk almost everyday at lunch. How could we deny this same opportunity to the rest of the FMD students?

Several of the other students expressed interest in having the opportunity to join in on the daily lunch activities that take place in the cafeteria. Deidre was unsure if she would like it more than eating in the classroom, but these doubts stem from a lack of experience. She said, "I'd like to eat with you guys, but I don't know. I've never eaten in there before. I don't know if I'd like it more or not." I am confident that, when given the chance, she would benefit from the opportunity just as much as Jeffrey. She thought it would be fun to talk to her other peer tutors outside the classroom, and to meet the other students going to .

But Deidre is not the only one concerned about the lunchroom atmosphere. Perhaps we should worry, like Josh, another FMD student, about the fact that several of these students are in wheelchairs. His only doubt about eating in the cafeteria is his dependence on his wheelchair. Obviously, this makes him less agile than the other

students who wait in line and it would make it harder for him to maneuver through the obstacle-filled lunchroom. Even a greater worry though is that Josh obviously feels alienated and inferior to the other students because of his disability. By including him in the daily lunchroom activities, it could help him feel more comfortable with the other students.

However, it is possible that all the FMD students would not want to eat lunch in the cafeteria, but it would not have to be an everyday commitment. And this hesitation is understandable, but they must be offered the opportunity and be given a chance to decide for themselves. One of the reasons Deidre and Josh do not eat there now is because they are in wheelchairs, making it hard for them to find a place to sit or wait in line. However, Section 504, a law that was put into effect in 1973, says that buildings must remove barriers that restrict a disabled person's accessibility. This is not seen in \_\_\_\_\_'s lunchroom.

You must do whatever it takes to help incorporate these students into the normal day of a high school student. It will help build their self-esteem and prepare them for the world waiting for them outside the walls of \_\_\_\_\_ High School. The next step in this transition is the opportunity for the FMD students to eat in the lunchroom. If it means having to make it more accessible to our students with wheelchairs, then the initiative must be taken. If money is an issue, then a fundraiser could be used to help raise money. Please consider the wellbeing of these students, and then take the necessary steps to fully integrate them into the student body.

Sincerely,

## In Memoriam: An Accomplished Piece of Poetry?

Although the worthiness of Alfred Lord Tennyson's poetry has been controversial, after the death of his close companion and fellow poet Arthur Henry Hallam, his poetry took a turn for the better. Although critics initially believed him to be unqualified to write poetry, after the success of many of his works in the 1840's, including "In Memoriam," "The Passing of Arthur," and "Ulysses," and his appointment as Poet Laureate in 1850, he was finally regarded as an accomplished poet. Tennyson's "In Memoriam" exemplifies this profound improvement in Tennyson's work flawlessly. Through its unique chronicle form, universal process of grieving, and the juxtaposition of Tennyson's conflicting views on death, "In Memoriam" becomes an epitome of venerable poetry.

"In Memoriam," is book-length work that narrates the grieving process through 131 lyric poems. Each lyric poem represents Tennyson in one moment of his grieving, from initial shock, mounting depression, total despair, to an inspiring end where he comes to accept death. For example, in lyric 7, Tennyson is still suffering from the initial grief of Hallam's death when he wrote, "So quickly, waiting for a hand / A hand that can be clasped no more." He is still adjusting to not having someone that he relied on there. Later, in lyric 34, Tennyson reaches the nadir of his depression and reflects on the meaning of life when death is inevitable. The excerpt "'T were best at once to sink to piece / to drop head-foremost in the jaws of vacant darkness and to cease," depicts Tennyson's consideration of death as the absolute end, questioning the point of the pain he felt. Finally, though, Tennyson finds new hope. In lyric 119 he wrote "I take the

pressure of thine hand.” Here “thine hand” is Hallam’s hand, the same hand that Tennyson was “waiting for” and that could be “clasped no more” in lyric 7. This differs greatly from the Elizabethan sonnets whose purposes were almost exclusive to love sentiments and the stereotypical innamorata. Perhaps it was Tennyson’s revolutionary and atypical form that caused his critics to renounce his work. However, this perceived flaw can now be recognized as one of Tennyson’s strengths.

The primary purpose of “In Memoriam” was to recount the universally experienced grieving process. The death of Hallam when Tennyson was 23 served as a powerful theme for his poetry. This subject was often overlooked by Tennyson’s peers, making it even more distinctive. The comparison of human and animal emotions (lyric 27), the meaning of life (lyric 34), the necessity of hope (lyric 54), that are depicted in “In Memoriam,” give the poem’s purpose more depth, and therefore the poem more worth. Tennyson wrote:

I envy not the beast that takes  
His license in the field of time  
Unfettered by the sense of crime  
To whom a conscience never wakes

in an effort to explain that animals are incapable of conscience, guilt, or love, and that without such emotions, especially love, Tennyson himself would not grieve for the loss of Hallam. Moreover, “In Memoriam” is timeless. In fact, lines 15 and 16 of Lyric 27, “‘Tis better to have loved and lost / than never have loved at all” is still quoted frequently today, more than a century after this work was published. The timelessness and universality of “In Memoriam” makes it a commendable poem.

Throughout the poem, Tennyson juxtaposes his feelings toward death in an effort to elucidate the grieving process to his audience. The use of juxtaposition therefore shows that Tennyson not only knows how to manipulate words to accomplish his purpose, but also that he is aware of his audience's needs. He wrote "'T were best at once to sink to peace.../...of vacant darkness and to cease," (lines 13, 16) implying that if the sole purpose of living is to feel pain, then one might as well die and effectively end his or her suffering. However, this was juxtaposed in lyric 54. "Oh yet we trust that somehow good will be the final goal of all," (lines 1,2), Tennyson wrote, finding a new sense of hope amidst the despair of Hallam's death. Later in this same lyric poem, he included the metaphor "and every winter change to spring." (line 15) Here, Tennyson's grief is symbolized by the cold and dreary winter, and he uses the inevitable change from winter to spring to symbolize the end of his depression, and the beginning of his acceptance of Hallam's death, spring. Lyric 7 and 119 are also juxtaposed. In lyric 7, Tennyson wanders at Hallam's door, grieving the loss of his confidante. He is "guilty" and "creeps" by the "dark house" on the "unlovely street." However, in lyric 119, he smells "the meadow in the street" and hears "a chirp of birds." The juxtaposition of his moods and his initial grief with his final faith in God successfully completes the grieving process.

Tennyson's poem "In Memoriam" is a worthy poem that effectively fulfilled its purpose, to recount the grieving process. Through analysis of his work, it becomes clear that Tennyson, although once questioned, is an excellent poet. His use of meaningful and timeless theme and his depth of thought and unique form make this poem superior to others of its time. In addition, Tennyson's ability to manipulate language and

his awareness of audience exemplify his qualification to write poetry. Therefore, unlike the first critiques of his poetry, “In Memoriam” can be deemed a notable poem and Tennyson himself an accomplished poet.

### Works Cited

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